

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 117

BY SENATOR CATHEY

A RESOLUTION

To memorialize the Congress of the United States to pass the AMERICANS Act of 2023 to reinstate any service member removed from any branch of the military for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine.

WHEREAS, in August of 2021, United States Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin required COVID-19 vaccinations for all service members; and

WHEREAS, at the direction of Congress in January of 2022, Secretary Austin rescinded the COVID-19 vaccination mandate; and

WHEREAS, during the effective period of the mandate, approximately eight thousand two hundred service members of the armed forces were discharged for refusing to get the vaccine for religious or other reasons; and

WHEREAS, while the passing of the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act ended the mandate, it did not go far enough to prevent a similar mandate in the future or provide meaningful remedies for service members that were kicked out of the military; and

WHEREAS, if the AMERICANS Act of 2023 is enacted, service members that were involuntarily separated from their service would be credited with missed retirement pay, have their rank restored, and receive any compensation for any pay or benefits lost due to the demotion or discharge; and

WHEREAS, the AMERICANS Act of 2023 would also change any "general" discharge given to the unvaccinated to "honorable" and expunge the records of service members who faced adverse action for their refusal to be vaccinated; and

WHEREAS, the enactment of the AMERICANS Act of 2023 would result in a fair and just outcome for those loyal service members who were discharged for remaining true to their personal convictions.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the Congress of the United States to pass the AMERICANS Act of 2023 to reinstate any service member removed from any branch of the military for refusing the COVID-19 vaccine.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE